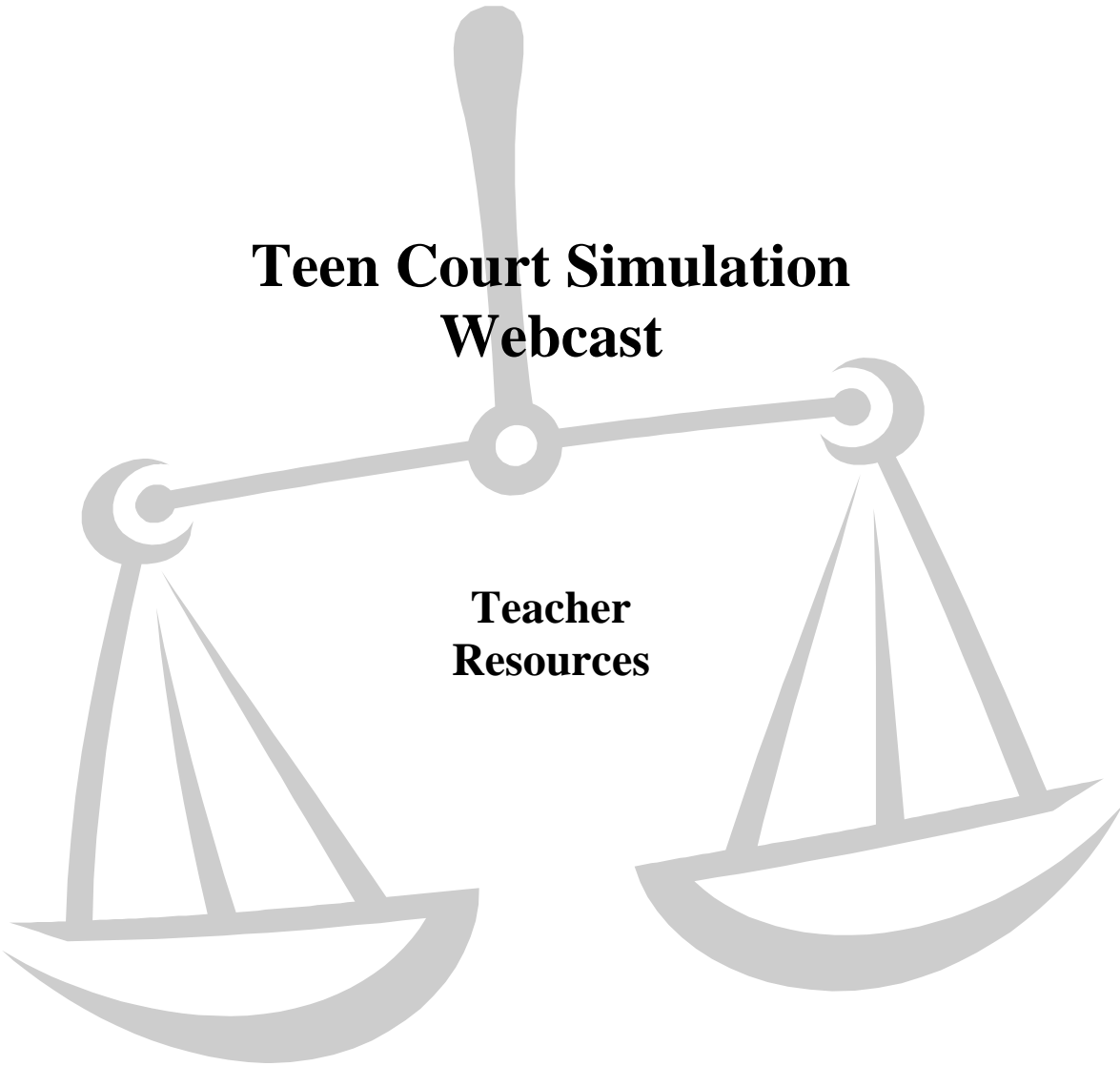


Teen Court Simulation Webcast

Teacher Resources



Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center
925 W. Ottawa St.
P.O. Box 30205
Lansing, MI 48909
517-373-7229
web: courts.mi.gov/plc/

Introduction

A simulation, such as mock trial or mock hearing, can be an excellent way to engage students in real-life situations that require higher-order thinking. Simulations allow students to practice skills related to public discourse and decision making, and they bring government procedures to life.

The webcast shows what a teen court hearing might be like. It is based upon a script written by the Lansing Teen Court to train high school students who serve as peer jurors. The webcast was filmed as a part of the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center's Exploring Careers in the Law, 2009. Participants were 7th–9th grade students interested in pursuing legal careers.

Grade Level and Curriculum Connections

This lesson is most appropriate for middle school and high school students. It addresses a variety of curriculum content expectations, including:

Social Studies

8 – P3.1.1, 8 – P4.2.1, HS Civics – 3.3.4, HS Civics – 3.4.5, HS Civics – 5.3.7, HS Civics – 5.4.2, HS Civics 5.4.3, HS Civics 6.1.2, HS Civics – 6.2.10, HS Civics – 6.2.11

English Language Arts

Grade 7: S.DS.07.01, S.DS.07.02, L.RP.07.06. Grade 8: S.DS.08.01, S.DS.08.02, L.RP.08.05, L.RP.08.06. High School: CE 1.3.1, CE 1.3.7, CE 2.1.3, CE 2.1.11, CE 2.2.2, CE 2.3.1, CE 2.3.3, CE 2.3.4, CE 4.1.2, CE 4.1.3, CE 4.2.1, CE 4.2.2

Time Required

1–2 class periods

Objectives

Students will:

- Discuss the process of teen court.
- View a webcast of a simulated hearing.
- Participate in a mock deliberation.

Instructional Resources

- Broadband internet access set up to view the webcast.
- Copies of handouts provided.

Technical Requirements

To view the webcast, you will need:

- Internet access with appropriate bandwidth.
- A sound card/speakers.
- Popups enabled for the you-niversity.com web site.

To test your computer, go to the web address below and follow the two-step process as indicated. <http://webcast.you-niversity.com/youtools/wizard/live/default.asp>.

Sequence of Activities

1. Discuss the brief reading, About Lansing Teen Court. Questions may include:
 - Which group of individuals makes the decisions in teen court proceedings?
 - Teens are trained to serve as peer jurors, offering recommendations for appropriate dispositions to help respondents heal the harm they have done.
 - Note: In adult criminal trials, the role of the jury is different from peer juries in teen court. Adult juries decide whether the accused person is guilty or not guilty. They do not have a role in determining the consequences if the defendant is found guilty. The judge is responsible for determining the sentence of the guilty party.
 - Who refers teens to the Lansing Teen Court? Who must agree to participate?
 - Prosecutor – Represents the “people of the State of Michigan” in criminal cases and brings charges against someone accused of a crime.
 - Family Division of Circuit Court – Is responsible for all court cases related to families, including juvenile delinquency. This is the court that would handle the case if a juvenile respondent does not participate in teen court.
 - The family must agree to participate. The teen respondent must admit guilt.
 - What are the advantages to the respondent of participating in teen court?
 - Taking personal responsibility.
 - Rebuilding relationships.
 - Correcting the harm done by the offense.
 - Avoiding a formal juvenile record.
 - Many jobs (lawyer, judge, criminal justice, military, etc.) are difficult/impossible to pursue with offenses on your record.
 - Do you think that teen respondents would be more or less likely to listen to teens or to adults? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the “Case Details” sheet, outlining what happened to bring the respondent to teen court.
 - Who is accused of breaking the law? What is the respondent accused of doing? What are the potential consequences?
 - Depending upon the class, you may wish to have students read and discuss the texts of those sections of the Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL).
 - Retail Fraud (MCL 750.356d(4))
<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-750-356d>
 - Minor in Possession of Alcohol (MCL 436.1703)
<http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-436-1703>

- What do you know about the respondent that shows she may be making poor decisions in other areas of her life? What factors does she have in her favor?
3. Review the Teen Court Roles and General Question Guide handouts with the class so they are familiar with the players and the types of questions the jury will ask.
 4. View the teen court webcast. (Note: It is highly recommended that you try viewing the webcast ahead of time on the same equipment that you will use with the class as you may need to make adjustments to your settings. See Technical Requirements above.)
 5. Debrief the proceedings. The discussion may include the following questions:
 - What happened?
 - What other questions would you have asked? How do you think Jill would respond to your questions?
 6. Divide the class into two or three groups to simulate peer jury deliberation for *Lansing Teen Court v Jill*.
 - Distribute a copy of the “Jury Deliberation Guide,” “Final Disposition,” and “Final Disposition Definitions” to each group.
 - Each group should appoint a foreperson and a recorder.
 - As demonstrated in the webcast, the juries should read, discuss, and decide on each possible order from the Final Disposition form. Majority rules.
 - The jury foreperson stands to read aloud the orders that their group selected on the Final Disposition form.
 7. Debrief the process with the groups.
 - What ideas did the group discussion bring out?
 - If you knew a teen who made a poor decision and found themselves eligible for teen court, would you recommend that they participate? Why or why not?

Extension Activity

- Contact a youth/teen court near you to see if your students could become involved in real hearings. Many teen courts work directly with schools to recruit peer jurors. The National Association of Youth Courts lists programs by state at the following link: <http://www.youthcourt.net/content/view/7/14/>.

About Lansing Teen Court

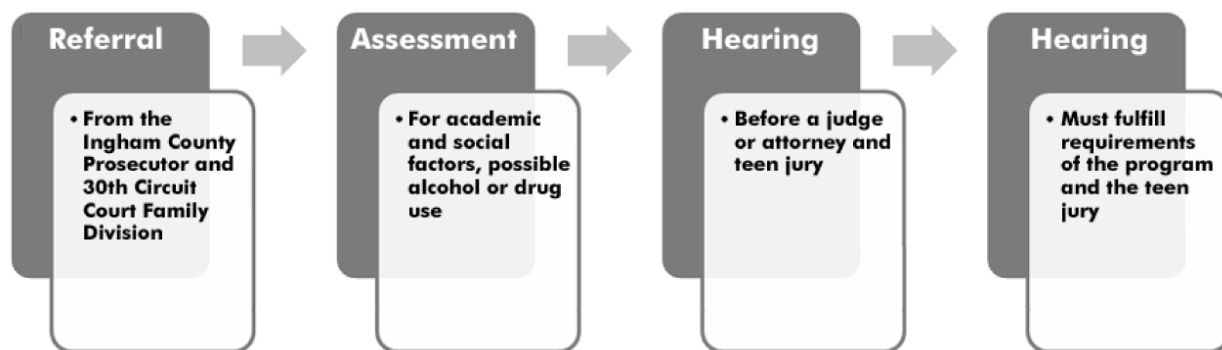


Lansing Teen Court provides first-time juvenile respondents (offenders) the opportunity to take personal responsibility for a criminal offense without establishing a formal juvenile record. Once the respondent has completed his or her disposition (sentence), the offense is completely dismissed. Successful respondents learn to rebuild relationships, solve problems, and repair the harm they have caused. Typically, they are invited back to serve as Peer Jurors, bringing them back into the community as a valued contributor.

During a Teen Court hearing, a trained peer jury of teens questions the respondent, his or her parent/guardian, and the victim to recommend a final disposition (sentence) in the case. The Lansing Teen Court promotes a different approach to the juvenile justice process. Teens telling teens that their behavior is not acceptable sends a positive peer pressure message:

**Act responsibly and make better choices,
which will result in personal success.**

Representatives of the Ingham County Prosecutor's Office and the Family Division of 30th Circuit Court recommend respondents to Lansing Teen Court. It is the family's choice to participate. The respondent must freely admit guilt and demonstrate willingness to participate in the Teen Court process.



91% of the respondents complete Teen Court successfully.

98% of teen volunteers feel they have benefited from serving as Peer Jurors.

Case Details – *Lansing Teen Court v Jill*

Docket No. 71509
Respondent: Jill **Age:** 16
Offense: Retail Fraud – 3rd Degree / Minor in Possession of Alcohol (MIP)
Location: Spike's Party Store, Lansing
Date: December 31, 6 p.m.

Loss Prevention Department Report

Items concealed in coat:

- Four bottles of liquor (two each)
- Merchandise total = \$29.50

Two individuals (later determined to be a boyfriend/girlfriend couple) exited the store without indication of paying for any of the concealed items. When stopped outside the store subjects were cooperative and willingly accompanied loss prevention officers to the security office for questioning.

Case Status

- Police interviewed subjects with parent permission.
- Subjects admitted to Retail Fraud (shoplifting).
- Petition issued for Retail Fraud and Minor In Possession of Alcohol (MIP)
- Parents notified and instructed to pick up individuals at the store.
- Petition referred to Teen Court Juvenile Justice Diversion Program.
- Civil demand for \$200 issued and subjects banned for 1 year from Spike's Party Store.

Family: Respondent lives with both parents. Owns a car and works part time.

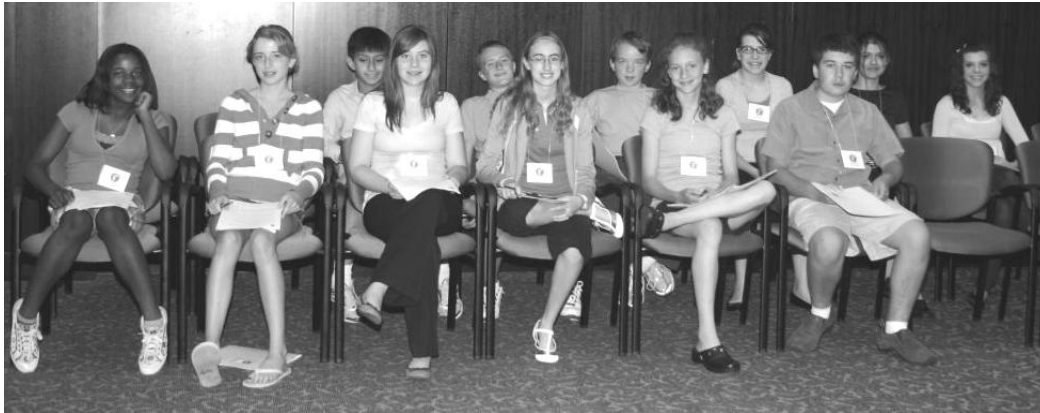
School: Respondent is a star member of the basketball team; previously an honor student but has been struggling to keep grades up during the past school year.

Count 1: Retail Fraud – Third Degree. Above named minor did while store was open to the public, steal property of that store that was offered for sale, contrary to MCL 750.356d(4). Misdemeanor: 93 days and/or \$500.

Count 2: Minor In Possession of Alcohol (MCL 436.1703). Potential suspension of driver's license.

Teen Court Roles

Peer Jury – Asks questions of the respondent, parents/guardians, and victim; deliberates; and then determines a disposition for the respondent. Before students serve as peer jurors, they must complete a training that helps them to understand their role.



Judge (“The Honorable B. Fair”) – Presides over the hearing and makes sure that it is conducted fairly. In a real teen court hearing, the judge may be an elected judge or a lawyer. In the video, the judge is played by a student and is assisted by the moderator.



Teen Court Bailiff – Brings the court into session (“All rise. Hear ye, hear ye . . .”), escorts the jury to and from the deliberation room, and closes the session. The role of bailiff is filled by a student in teen court.



Teen Court Clerk – Reads the docket, swears in jurors, and swears in the respondent, parents/guardian, and victim. The role of court clerk is filled by a student in teen court.



Respondent (“Jill,” 16 years old) – Has admitted to breaking the law. Upon successful completion of the program, including the disposition received at the hearing, the respondent will not have a juvenile or criminal record. In teen court, respondents are 11–16 years old.



Parents/Guardians (“Joe” and “Ann”) – In teen court, the parents/guardians play an important role. They hold the respondent accountable, and they offer support for the respondent as he/she completes the disposition. For example, they may attend family counseling, if required.



Victim (“Don” of “Spike’s Party Store”) – The person directly affected by the crime. In the video, the victim is the loss prevention officer at a party store. He stopped the respondent and her boyfriend leaving the store with alcohol they made no attempt to purchase.



Teen Court Representative – Discusses the progress of the respondent since entering the program.



Moderator – Assists the students in their roles and explains what is happening for the webcast audience. In an actual teen court hearing, a moderator does not take part.

General Question Guide – During Teen Court Hearings

Remember, out of respect for others, do not joke inappropriately in our courtroom.

SECTION 1: QUESTIONS FOR THE RESPONDENT

General Questions

- ☐ If you were with others when you committed this offense, describe your relationship with them.
- ☐ Can you give us an example of the harm you caused yourself? Your family? The community?
- ☐ Can you describe how your family felt when they found out what you did?
- ☐ Do you currently use alcohol or marijuana? If yes, what have you used and when did you start?
- ☐ Can you describe how your involvement in Teen Court is going to help you?
- ☐ Can you describe the legal consequences of your offense? (Banned? Fines? Suspension?)
- ☐ Do you have an adult role model you look to for guidance?
- ☐ Describe your advice you would give to others who may be thinking about doing something that is illegal?

Questions About the Victim (Or For the Victim)

- ☐ How did you feel when this happened?
- ☐ What harm was caused when this offense was committed?
- ☐ What would you like the respondent to do to repair the harm caused?
- ☐ What would you like the respondent to learn from this incident?

Questions About Family Background

- ☐ Do you think your family has lost trust? Describe what you are doing to earn back your family's trust?
- ☐ Do you live with both of your parents? Do you have older or younger siblings you live with?
- ☐ Do you feel your parent(s) listen to you? Do you listen to your parents about important things?
- ☐ Do you have a curfew? If yes, what time is it?
- ☐ What do you like to do in your free time? Hobbies?

Questions About School

- ☐ Describe what you like about school? What grade are you currently in? What kind of grades do you earn?
- ☐ Do you skip classes or school days? Have you ever been caught skipping school? Are you ever tardy?
- ☐ Have you ever been suspended or received detention?
- ☐ Describe your goals after you graduate from high school? Do you have any career goals?

SECTION 2: QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

- ☐ How did you feel when you found out about this incident?
- ☐ Do you plan to make any changes in how you monitor your son's/daughter's choices?
- ☐ How did you hold your son/daughter accountable? What discipline did you use at home?
- ☐ Describe your family discussions about the dangers of abusing drugs? Do you talk about this?
- ☐ Peer groups are important, do you feel you know your son's/daughter's friends?
- ☐ Do you talk with him/her about important things, such as personal goals?

Jury Deliberation Guide

Special Instructions: Review information gained during the hearing and issue a fair, just, and helpful final disposition that will:

- Hold the respondent accountable and encourage personal responsibility.
 - Help rebuild relationships that have been hurt.
 - Repair harm that they have caused others.
 - Link with appropriate individuals or organizations to meet identified needs.
 - Resolve the identified problems and give back to the community.
 - Help restore what has been lost.
-

Before you discuss the facts of the case:

1. Select a jury foreperson to lead discussion, keep the group on task, and watch the time.
 2. Appoint a jury recorder to complete the final disposition form as peer jury agrees on each item.
 3. From the questions asked and the information given during the courtroom proceedings, you must decide a fair disposition; focus upon what was said.
 4. A majority of jury members must vote in favor of each order for it to be official. *Do not allow one person to decide, as the majority needs to approve.*
 5. Ask yourselves the guideline questions below to help you determine the final disposition.
 6. You have at least ____ minutes to complete your task; get seated and start discussing.
 7. Consult with the jury monitor (teacher) if you get stuck on an issue or need guidance.
-

Use these questions to help you determine the underlying causes of the respondent's actions:

- Who was the victim(s)? What are the needs of the victim(s)? What harm was caused by the respondent's actions? Did the respondent appear to regret or express sorrow for his/her actions?
- If yes, has the respondent done anything to repair the harm caused?
- What family, community, school relationships were harmed by the respondent's actions?
- From your questions and statements made in court by the respondent, family, victim, were there any special problems identified? (Illegal alcohol or other illegal substance use issues, anger management?)
- What do you think the respondent's disposition should be to repair the harm caused?
- What special skills does the respondent have to offer as a form of community service?
- The jury foreperson is responsible for reading the final disposition. Helpful and encouraging words should be shared with the respondent during the reading of the disposition.

Final Disposition

Respondent's Name: Jill Offense: Retail Fraud / MIP Date: December 31

The jury foreperson reads all required and optional orders issued by the jury.

Required final disposition orders are:

- X Attend School on time and demonstrate progress in all classes.
- X Work on improving relationships that were harmed resulting from your offense.
- X You must complete weekly phone progress reports to your Youth Advocate with Teen Court.
- X Participate in Teen Court bi-weekly Street Law Workshops.
- X If you have not already paid \$30 program oversight fee, you must make arrangements to do so today.

We the peer jury issue the following orders to hold you accountable and to repair harm to the victim(s):

- _____ Perform _____ hours of Volunteer work; this is (_____ in addition to what you have completed.)
- _____ Write a Personal Apology within _____ days of today's date to the _____ Victim _____ School _____ Family.
- _____ Pay Restitution expenses to victim. (Money owed to victim(s) for damages; verified by Teen Court.)
- _____ Plan a way to help your family pay the expenses related to your offense.
- _____ Serve as a Peer Juror to help someone who may be experiencing difficulty similar to yours.
- _____ If you have not already completed your "Service Screening," complete it and follow recommendations.
- _____ If you are already participating in a counsel service, you must follow the recommendations of your counselor to continue.
- _____ You must participate in Drug Testing. (Teen Court will determine frequency of your drug screens.)
- _____ Complete _____ weekly or _____ bi-weekly school progress reports to Teen Court officials.
- _____ Participate in school resources, such as personal tutoring, to help you raise your grades.
- _____ Attend Ingham County Sheriff's Tour of Ingham County Jail. (Teen Court will schedule tour.)
- _____ Write a Personal Code of Ethics (personal rules to guide your decisions); share it with: _____.
- _____ Write a one-page essay on "decision making" to understand better the importance of making good choices.
- _____ Comply with boundaries, such as home curfew, chores, and family goals.
- _____ You are to have no contact with those individuals you were with during this event outside of school.
- _____ You have _____ 1 month, _____ 2 months, _____ 3 months to complete your Final Disposition. (**Must decide time period.**)
- Other: _____

Acceptance of Disposition: Must be signed by all parties before leaving courtroom.

I hereby **accept** the Teen Court's disposition and will do my best to repair the harm caused.

 do not accept the Teen Court's disposition.

Juvenile Respondent

Date / / 20

Parent/Guardian

Date / /20

Teen Court Administrator

Date / /20

Judge/Honorary Judge

Date / / 20

Teen Court Fee

☐ Paid

☐ Partial Payment

☐ Balance: _____

Date: _____

Final Disposition Definitions

Required Orders *(Must be read by the jury foreperson.)*

- **Oversight Fee** - Must pay a \$30 fee to the Teen Court administrator after the hearing.
 - **School Attendance** - All respondents must be in school (or an acceptable educational program) and make significant weekly progress as reported by his or her teachers.
 - **Disposition Period** – Not less than 30 days or more than four months (shorter is better).
 - **Complete Weekly Report Calls** – Phone the Youth Advocate or Teen Court office to report progress.
 - **Street Law Workshops** – Respondents must attend biweekly Street Law Workshops.
 - **Work on Repairing Relationships That Were Harmed** – Regain trust of those that were harmed by your actions.
-

Alternatives

- **Volunteer Work** – Minimum of eight hours, maximum of 40 hours; to be determined by jury. If appropriate, community service should be related to the offense, but jury should not dictate location.
- **Personal Apology** – Written apology to those that were harmed; to be determined by jury.
- **Restitution** – Payback verified out-of-pocket expenses of victim(s).
- **Family Expenses** – Pay back parents/guardians.
- **Peer Jury Duty** – Serve on the peer jury to help someone who may be experiencing similar difficulties.
- **Service Screening** – Individual must participate to determine the need for personal, family, or substance abuse counseling services. Respondent must comply with the recommendations of the therapist.
- **Drug Testing** – Participate in monitored drug screenings to demonstrate reduction/abstinence.
- **School Resources** – Based upon grades, seek tutoring or other help through Cooley/Community resources. (Must determine school-based services first.)
- **Ingham County Sheriff's Tour of the County Jail** – Tour of the adult jail. (A good reality check.)
- **Personal Code of Conduct/Ethics** – Create a list of behavior-oriented things to do to steer clear of trouble, e.g., "I will be honest," "I will not steal," "I will do my homework and hand it in on time."
- **No Contact** with the parties related to the offense outside school while actively involved in Teen Court.
- **Comply with home boundaries**: curfew, chores, give respect to gain respect of parents/guardians.
- **Other** – Any other disposition that the jury deems appropriate. The focus should always be on restorative justice, i.e., repairing the harm, solving problems, building skills, expanding knowledge, serving victims.

Online Resources

Teen Court

National Association of Youth Courts

<http://www.youthcourt.net/>

Innovations in District Court: Teen Court, Michigan Bar Journal, February 2004

<http://www.michbar.org/journal/pdf/pdf4article671.pdf>

35th District Court Probation Department Programs

<http://www.35thdistrictcourt.org/probationdepartment/programs.html>

52-1 District Court Teen Court

http://www.oakgov.com/dc52div1/probation/teen_court.html

City of Holland Teen Court

<http://www.hollandteencourt.org/>

Wayne County Teen Court

<http://www.waynecounty.com/mygovt/prosecutor/teenCourt.aspx>

Restorative Justice

Central Michigan Restorative Justice Initiative

<http://www.centralmichiganrestorativejustice.com/>

Restorative Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

http://www2.dsgonline.com/mpg/program_types_description.aspx?program_type=Restorative%20Justice&continuum=intermediate

Safer Saner Schools

<http://www.safersanerschools.org/>

Legal Reference

Handbook of Legal Terms

<http://courts.michigan.gov/mji/resources/holt/holt.htm>

Glossary

Disposition – Consequence given to a young person involved in a juvenile case. In an adult case, the consequence is called a sentence.

Family Division of Circuit Court – Hears cases about family matters, such as paternity, adoption, personal protection orders, juvenile delinquency, divorce, and more.

Juvenile – A minor under the age of 17.

Juvenile Delinquency Proceedings – Proceedings in the family division of the circuit court regarding a minor under age 17 who has committed an offense that would be a crime if committed by an adult, including a misdemeanor traffic offense; desertion of his or her home; absence from school; repeated violations of school rules; or, disobeying reasonable and lawful commands of his or her parents. See MCL 712A.2(a).

Michigan Compiled Laws (MCL) – State statutes (laws) organized by topic. They are often cited in the style of the following example: MCL 750.365d(4). The Michigan Legislature maintains an online version: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/>.

Minor in Possession of Alcohol (MIP) – Purchase, consumption, or possession of alcoholic liquor by a person less than 21 years of age. For a full definition, see MCL 436.1703.

Peer Jury – Group of teens trained to ask questions and deliberate effectively in order to decide on a disposition for a teen respondent.

Prosecutor – An attorney who is the elected official that serves as the chief law enforcement officer of that county. A prosecuting attorney is responsible for taking legal action in criminal proceedings on behalf of the people of the State of Michigan.

Respondent – Young person involved in a juvenile delinquency case.

Restorative Justice – A philosophy that views crime as a violation of people and relationships. Programs that emphasize restorative justice focus on repairing the harm done by the offender by bringing together the offender, victims, family members, and the community.

Retail Fraud – Stealing from a store; commonly known as shoplifting. For a full definition, see MCL 750.356d.

Teen Court – A court for youth ages 11–16 who commit minor offenses such as petty theft, possession of alcohol, or disorderly conduct. The youth receive consequences not from the juvenile court system but from a “jury” of their peers.